

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



20 March 2017

Mrs Rachel Keating  
Acting headteacher  
Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School  
Downall Green Road  
Bryn  
Wigan  
Lancashire  
WN4 0LZ

Dear Mrs Rachel Keating

### **Short inspection of Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The temporary leadership arrangements that are in place while the headteacher supports a local school are working well. Staff uphold the school's mission statement and make sure that their school is a happy place where children are looked after, share and make friends and everyone always does their best. The 'family feel' and caring ethos of the school is valued by pupils and staff.

Your high expectations for pupils' achievement, behaviour and well-being are shared by leaders at all levels, staff and governors. Everyone works together to make sure that the strengths identified at the last inspection are sustained. Governors have a good grasp of performance data and know the school well. They maintain review policies regularly and carry out their responsibilities diligently. They provide good support and challenge for school leaders and have high ambitions for pupils.

The vast majority of pupils rise to the high expectations for their behaviour and follow the school's behaviour code. They are kind and considerate towards each other and motivated and attentive in lessons. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and represent their school with pride, for example as school councillors and prefects. The small minority of pupils who struggle to sustain concentration in lessons or with their behaviour in the playground are supported well. Any behaviour that does not meet the high expectations is dealt with quickly and fairly.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points and attain at least expected standards in standardised assessments. Their good progress is underpinned by effective assessment and constructive relationships. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above average at key stage 1. At key stage 2, pupils' progress was well above average in reading and writing and a well above average proportion met the expected standards in these subjects. Their progress and attainment in mathematics was in line with the national average. Disadvantaged pupils made similarly good progress from their starting points to others in school and attained in line with other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Pupils currently in the school make good progress across the whole of their school career. The vast majority are working at the standards expected for their age or above in each year group. There is some unevenness in their progress from year to year and in different subjects, however. Children in the early years make good progress in all areas of learning and particularly rapid progress in mathematics. The proportion who reach a good level of development is now well above average. Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress at key stage 1, where teaching meets their needs successfully. Pupils' progress is not as rapid at lower key stage 2, however. This is partly because pupils have some gaps in their learning in grammar and spelling and teaching is not precise enough to fill these gaps. Some work is not sufficiently demanding to enable the most able to make the progress they could in mathematics. Pupils make more rapid progress at upper key stage 2 and the majority of pupils are working at expected standards or above in Year 6.

You have tackled the areas that were identified as requiring improvement at the last inspection successfully. Leaders at all levels now have more involvement in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning within all areas of the curriculum. Staff receive good-quality training to support the development of their leadership skills and make sure that they are fully up to date with their areas of responsibility. Their termly scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of teaching provide leaders with a good overview of curriculum coverage and the strengths and weaknesses in their subject. Their regular reports to governors ensure that the governing body is well informed and able to ask challenging questions. As yet, however, subject leaders have had limited impact in developing teaching across the school. Foundations are in place to develop their role further.

Pupils' writing across all subjects has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects and for different purposes. You have rightly identified that the teaching of grammar, spelling and punctuation needs to improve to enable pupils to develop greater depth in their writing. The grammar lessons and increased focus on grammar and spelling in all subjects are beginning to improve these aspects of writing successfully.

The majority of parents who responded to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, are positive about the school. They made many positive comments, including, for example, 'Our Lady's School offers stimulating lessons and a vast range of opportunities to enhance learning' and 'It's a friendly, homely school where

my child is made to feel welcome.' However, a few parents expressed concerns about inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and application of the behaviour code as pupils move through the school. A few parents are concerned about the mixed-age classes. Engagement with parents is not as effective as it could be, for example in explaining how classes are organised, in taking account of parents' views and in ensuring that parents are aware of the good work of the school.

Leaders' accurate self-evaluation equips staff and governors with a clear overview of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Improvement planning is focused on the right priorities and actions taken to date have had a positive impact, for example in raising children's achievement in the early years, improving pupils' phonic skills and addressing areas for improvement from the last inspection. This demonstrates the capacity within the school to secure further improvements. Improvement planning is not as sharp as it could be, however, in identifying precisely the actions that need to be taken to further improve teaching and how the impact of actions will be measured.

You ensure that all staff engage effectively with colleagues from other schools in the area through the local consortium. The well-developed partnership arrangements support effective peer review, sharing of best practice and moderation of pupils' work. The substantive headteacher is currently providing support to a local school. The local authority has limited contact with the school, which is appropriate for a good school with the capacity to secure continuous improvement.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture for safety and pupils' well-being in school. Staff have an in-depth understanding of their responsibilities and know the routes to follow if they have concerns. All staff and governors have completed training appropriate to their roles and are knowledgeable about their 'Prevent' duty. They are vigilant about pupils' safety. Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe outside school. There are appropriate filtering systems to keep pupils safe when online in school, and pupils' 'online safety' posters provide good advice for keeping safe at home.

Pupils say that they feel safe and free from bullying in school. They are knowledgeable about different types of bullying and feel that it is dealt with appropriately on the rare occasions it happens. Attendance is typically above average. Attendance is monitored closely and effective action is taken where appropriate. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View say that their children feel safe and well cared for, stating for example, 'The atmosphere is one of respect and kindness' and 'Children are happy and well cared for.' Several parents referred to the positive impact of the school on their child's confidence and self-esteem. A small minority feel that their children do not feel safe. There was no evidence to support this view during the inspection.

## **Inspection findings**

- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Good engagement with parents and increasingly effective liaison with a range of pre-school providers enable teaching staff to build on children's learning effectively from the start. Children feel welcome and settle quickly. Children enjoy a range of stimulating activities in the classroom and outdoors and make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Phonics and early reading skills are taught effectively in the early years and at key stage 1. Following pupils' below-average attainment in the phonics screening check in 2016, you have put effective measures in place to help them catch up in Year 2. Your revised and more systematic approach to phonics teaching is proving effective. Pupils develop confidence in reading early on, and the new reading resources support them to enjoy a range of reading materials as they progress through the school. Pupils make well above average progress in reading at key stage 2.
- Mathematics teaching supports pupils to make expected progress across the whole school from their various starting points, but their progress in mathematics is not as rapid as it is in reading and writing. Pupils enjoy mathematics because teachers plan interesting activities, including opportunities to solve problems, reasoning and investigative tasks. However, the activities are not consistently demanding, especially for the most able pupils at lower key stage 2.
- Pupils' writing across different subjects has improved significantly since the last inspection, when it was identified as an area for improvement. Pupils enjoy writing for a range of purposes and have a good understanding of the key features of different types of writing.
- You make sure that the additional pupil premium funding is used effectively to minimise any barriers and enrich learning for disadvantaged pupils. Governors monitor the impact of the funding carefully. The positive impact of additional small group or individual tuition and of additional resources can be seen in the consistently good progress and attainment by disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most-able. Leaders make sure that disadvantaged pupils have access to good-quality resources and technology to support learning and can access the full range of enrichment activities.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders continue to develop their role and use their expertise to support staff to improve teaching
- teaching supports pupils, especially the most able, to make at least good progress in every class in grammar, spelling and mathematics
- engagement with parents improves, so parents feel better informed about the quality of teaching and behaviour across the school
- action planning is more sharply focused on the improvements needed in

teaching.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the archdiocese of Liverpool, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wigan. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jean Olsson-Law  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I had meetings with you and the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, all teaching staff and two groups of pupils. I met with eight governors and spoke by telephone to the local schools consortium lead who provides school improvement support. I observed teaching and learning in all classes, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils during lessons. I spoke with parents at the school entrance and took account of 36 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire. I looked at information about pupils' progress and attainment and at your self-evaluation and action planning. I evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep children safe and records of training, safeguarding checks and behaviour management.